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TREASURY FOR JEFFERY LEVINE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/26/2016

TAGS: PGOV PREL ECON EAID HA

SUBJECT: HAITI: PM ASKS WHA A/S FOR HELP ON SECURITY,
DEPORTEES AND HOPE

REF: A. PAP 1303
B. PAP 1360

Classified By: Ambassador Janet A. Sanderson for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).).

¶1. (C) Summary: Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis told Assistant Secretary Thomas Shannon July 25 that the Donors' Conference was a success and proves Haiti is ready to assert its leadership and take back nation-building responsibilities from the international community. Alexis said the government plans to take action on the security situation in Port-au-Prince. He sought additional help from MINUSTAH to solve the recurring violence and asked Shannon if the U.S. would be willing to discuss possible procedures to enable criminal deportees to take part in a social reinsertion program once they return to Haiti. Alexis discussed HOPE with Shannon, highlighting its potential to create needed job opportunities. Per usual, Alexis offered an organized agenda and clear vision, though he lacked specifics, for the USG role in Haiti's development. End Summary.

¶2. (U) Prime Minister Jacques Edouard Alexis told Assistant Secretary Thomas Shannon and Ambassador Janet Sanderson July

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25 that the Donors' Conference was a success. It proves Haiti is ready to assert its leadership and take back nation-building responsibilities from the international community. Alexis said the new Haitian government is committed to creating a secure environment in which people can move freely and businesses can operate without fear of instability and lack of security. He said the GOH still needs the partnership of the U.S. and other international donors.

PM Asserts Vague Leadership on Security

¶3. (C) Alexis said the government plans to take action on the security situation in Port-au-Prince. He cited the appointment of two Secretaries of State, one for Justice and one for Public Security (ref A). He disagreed with criticism of his government for not publicly addressing the security

situation. "This is not the time to talk about the security situation; this is a time for action." (Note: In the weeks leading up the Donors, Conference, the GOH did not publicly address the worsening security situation, and twice postponed the press conference announcing the Donors' Conference, possibly to avoid questions about security. During the Conference, statements by both President Rene Preval and Alexis focused on security in Port-au-Prince. End note.)

14. (C) Alexis said that the GOH needs to find solutions to stem the rise in violence. To this end, the GOH is working with MINUSTAH and other international partners. He suggested that MINUSTAH would benefit from additional specialized forces capable of addressing urban violence. The Prime Minister said the violence is not politically motivated, but originates primarily from poverty, misery and the drug trade.

Alexis asked the U.S. to provide technical assistance to MINUSTAH and to assist with capacity building in Haiti. He asked that donors address the problem of poverty outlined in the GOH's Social Appeasement Program (PAS). Alexis also promised, but did not offer specific explanations, that Preval and he would focus on the security situation beginning the day after the Donors' Conference. Shannon offered continued U.S. support. He said that the criminals were threatening a democratic government, and Haiti's economic and social development. He urged Alexis to work with all sectors of society to address the security situation and assured him that the U.S. would continue to work closely with MINUSTAH.

Procedures for Criminal Deportees Need Review

15. (C) Alexis asked Shannon and the Ambassador to review the situation of criminal deportees, 120 of whom were scheduled to arrive in Haiti next week. (Note: Per ref B, following a

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July 26 meeting at the Ministry of the Interior, Poloff reports 50 deportees will arrive July 31. End note.) The Ambassador reminded Alexis that there is a backlog of Haitians to be returned. While Alexis did not endorse their return, neither did he raise objections for the group scheduled for repatriation within the week, despite ample opportunity to do so during the meeting.

16. (C) Alexis asked the USG to reconsider procedures for criminal deportees. He said he understands that the U.S. cannot keep prisoners who have already served their time. However, he suggested that while respecting both American and Haitian law, the prisoners could be returned to Haiti before they have served their entire sentence so that they can finish their sentence in Haiti and then be reinserted into society. Shannon agreed to further discussions about the precise procedure for criminal deportees but stressed the program needed to continue on schedule.

HOPE Offers Crucial Jobs

17. (U) Alexis asked for assistance with HOPE, important for job creation in Haiti. He underscored that the lack of jobs only adds to criminality. Shannon told Alexis that trade legislation remains politically sensitive in the U.S. Congress, though recent passage of the Free Trade Agreement with Oman was an important step in the right direction.

18. (SBU) Comment: Alexis appeared organized and presented his ideas succinctly. He had an agenda, almost a wish list, for Haiti's near future. In contrast to the long-term vision of President Preval, Alexis is more focused on finding practical solutions to Haiti's immediate problems, even if those plans lack specific details. End comment.

19. (U) A/S Shannon cleared on this message.
SANDERSON